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**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND
ACADEMIC TENURE
REPORT OF ENQUIRY INTO CONDITIONS AT
BETHANY COLLEGE***

I. THE COLLEGE UNDER INVESTIGATION

Bethany College, at Bethany, W. Va., is the oldest institution of learning belonging, from its founding, to the religious body known variously as Disciples of Christ, Churches of Christ, or Christians. Its charter was granted by the legislature of Virginia in the winter of 1840. It was founded by Alexander Campbell, its first president, and was designed to be "a literary, moral and religious school" wherein could be educated the leaders of what was at that time an infant denomination. The college has always given prominence to Bible teaching, and for many years trained the great majority of the ministers of the Disciples.

Like most of the small denominational colleges that abound in the Middle West, Bethany has had a checkered career, more than once reaching so low an ebb that it was uncertain whether it could survive. But it is reported in the 1918 Year-Book of the Churches of Christ as having an endowment of \$473,000, property valued at \$495,000, a faculty of 32 members, and 440 students, of whom 91 were candidates for the ministry, and 165 were young women. The Ministerial Department is not sharply separated from the college as a theological seminary.

While in a general way Bethany College belongs to the Disciples of Christ, the denomination, as a most extreme example of the congregational form of organization, has no direct or official control over the institution. The college is governed by a Board of Trustees who are a self-perpetuating body. It is composed of thirty more or less prominent clergymen and laymen from the Disciples of Christ who serve for a term of three years. They go out of office one third at a time and are eligible for reappointment. Such churches or individuals of the denomination as choose to give anything to the college, or send their young people to it for education, do so. Natur-

*The Appendix frequently referred to in this report is not printed in full but the complete Appendix is on file with the Secretary of the Association.

ally, the majority of those exercising such choice are in the territory not remote from the Panhandle of West Virginia, that is, in western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and parts of West Virginia itself. Only the pressure of public opinion, voiced chiefly by the pulpit and religious press potent within the region where the college gets most of its money and students, can influence the institution from without. There exists a general Board of Education of the Disciples of Christ with which Bethany College is affiliated, but it is just beginning to be a factor in the educational life of the Disciples, and has no control over the policies and conduct of the affiliated institutions. Responsibility for conditions existing at Bethany College, therefore, rests solely upon those who have power to control it, namely its president and its Board of Trustees.

II. THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

In July, 1917, Professor A. A. Young of Cornell University, chairman, Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure, American Association of University Professors, received through Professor John Dewey of Columbia University a request from Professor H. I. Croyle, late of the Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament, Bethany College, Bethany, W. Va., for an investigation of conditions in the college as to academic freedom and tenure. The request grew out of the dropping of Professor Croyle from the Bethany faculty, a few weeks before the close of the session, after a year of service there.

A preliminary enquiry conducted by Professor Young indicated that there was enough evidence submitted by Professor Croyle to warrant an investigation of conditions at Bethany. Upon submitting to the members of his committee the charges made and the evidence offered in support of them, Professor Young secured the approval of his decision by the committee. He thereupon took steps to secure from among the members of the Association a sub-committee of three to conduct the investigation. The committee was finally made up in January, 1918, consisting of Professor G. D. Hancock, Economics and Commerce, Washington and Lee University; Professor H. L. Willett, Semitic Languages and Literature, University of Chicago; and Professor W. M. Forrest, chairman, Biblical History and Literature, University of Virginia. Both the chairman and Professor Willett are members of the religious body with which Bethany is identified, both are teachers of the same gen-

eral subject as was the professor whose case was to be investigated, and Professor Willett is also an alumnus of Bethany College. These facts guaranteed that the investigation would be conducted without sectarian animus against Bethany College, and with a desire to do full justice to the professor lodging complaint.*

III. THE CHARGES PREFERRED

Professor H. I. Croyle, B.A., Drake University, M.A., Columbia University, B.D., Union Theological Seminary, was notified on August 1, 1916, by a letter from President T. E. Cramblet of Bethany College that he had been "elected to a Bible professorship" in that institution at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees held in Pittsburgh on July 26. The letter was sent in duplicate, and the signing and returning of one copy to President Cramblet constituted the only contract made between the college and Professor Croyle. All that was said as to tenure and duties was that "It is understood that you will teach this first year about 16 hours per week, and that your work will be Old Testament, Hebrew, and such other biblical subjects as may be mutually agreed upon."

Professor Croyle entered upon his duties at the opening of the session of 1916-17. On May 18, 1917, President Cramblet wrote him as follows:

"At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Trustees of Bethany College, I was instructed to express to you the thanks of the Trustees, and to say that we regret that we are unable to retain your services for the coming year. I am asked to assure you of the good wishes of the members of the Committee and to thank you for the work you have done for the College."

After receiving this notice, practically at the end of the session, Professor Croyle sought an explanation of it from the President, and from the Trustees when they met during the Bethany commencement. Finding that the action of the Committee was final, and learning all he could as to the reasons for it, he endeavored to have the case investigated by the American Association of University Professors, as has been related above.†

Professor Croyle did not reduce his charges against the college to

*Professor Willett was absent on service in France at the time of the completion of the final draft of the report, and was therefore unable to sign it.

† See Appendix A.

a detailed list, but the essential points, as gathered from the evidence submitted may be set forth as follows:

1. That he had been dismissed after a year's service although he had been led by the indefiniteness of the contract and conversations with the President to conclude that his tenure was not merely for one year.
2. That he had been given no notice of the intention of the college not to retain him until just a few weeks before the end of the session, which subjected him to undue hardship in finding employment for the next year.
3. That the Trustees, when he appeared before them a few weeks after receiving notice that he was dropped, refused to specify any charges against him, or tell him any reason for their course, or afford him any opportunity to plead his case.
4. That, the college had, in 1916, dropped two other professors as summarily as he had been dismissed, although one of them had been on the faculty for eleven years; and that one other colleague shared his fate in 1917.
5. That in violation of the principle of academic freedom his dismissal was due to complaints against his teaching as destructive criticism, lodged by students, preachers, and the proprietor of a denominational paper.

IV. THE INVESTIGATION

In his preliminary investigation of the case Professor Young wrote President Cramblet on July 28, 1917 informing him of Professor Croyle's request for an investigation, and asking for full information from the viewpoint of the college. On August 1 President Cramblet replied that Professor Croyle had proved a very incompetent teacher incapable of holding his classes together, that he said things in and out of class which injured the college, that since his dismissal he had entered upon a campaign of falsehood to injure the college, and was wholly unworthy of further consideration. The President added that the action of the Trustees was unanimous and had the approval of the faculty and friends of the college and that "we deem ourselves here able to direct the affairs of the college, and while your organization has a legitimate field, it certainly has no business meddling in this particular instance."

Upon his appointment as chairman of the special committee to make full investigation of the case, Professor Forrest, with the approval of his fellow committeemen, wrote President Cramblet that the main charge lodged against Bethany was that it had, in several instances, dismissed men from its faculty too late in the year, and without any statement of the reasons for such action. He said if the charges were true that probably arose from the fact that the Trustees were busy men who had little familiarity with generally accepted rules of academic procedure, and that the object of the

investigation would be much better attained by inducing the college to conform to approved academic usage than by casting reproach on the institution for any failure to observe such rules in the past. The President was then asked whether he would not try to induce his Trustees to agree, for the future, to explicit contracts of length of periods of employment of professors, several months' notice of intention to discontinue service, frank statement of reasons for dismissal, and opportunity for any professor dropped for cause, to know and answer any charges before final action by the Board.

In the absence of the President, receipt of the letter was acknowledged by Professor W. H. Cramblet, his son, who said that, "Mr. Croyle and the others referred to had been hired at Bethany for the period of one year." After a request to President Cramblet on March 2 to reply to the letter received in his absence, he wrote on March 9 expressing unwillingness to give further attention to the case of Professor Croyle and asserting "Our Board of Trustees feels wholly competent to manage its own affairs," and "For the present we are quite sure that we can make our own rules and conduct our own affairs better than some people who are not able to take care of their own business."

However, the President expressed his willingness to show adequate grounds for the removal provided the committee would pledge their honor as gentlemen to publish the facts as proved.

Professor Forrest replied on March 14 that Bethany could feel assured that the enquiry would be judicially conducted and a full report printed, as had been done in similar cases elsewhere. It was also urged that while Bethany was doubtless quite capable of conducting its own affairs, that neither colleges nor individuals could live to themselves, and that church colleges were most deeply obligated of all to be above reproach in their treatment of their professors.

No reply having been made to the letter by President Cramblet up to May 11, a letter was addressed on that date to Judge J. J. Campbell, a member of the Board of Trustees who had been mentioned in the Croyle correspondence in a way that made it seem likely that he might be interested. Copies of all letters to and from President Cramblet were enclosed, and Judge Campbell was asked for a clear and courteous statement of Bethany's side of the case. After waiting in vain for a reply, a statement of lack of progress was sent Professor Willett of the committee, with the request that he

avail himself of his position as an alumnus of Bethany to secure the co-operation of some one in authority to carry forward the case. He found it impossible to accomplish anything, and thus, after the lapse of more than a year since Professor Young first took up the matter with President Cramblet, and six months after Professor Forrest began the investigation, it appeared that the case would have to be concluded upon the evidence in hand. A digest of the charges, evidence, and findings was, therefore, forwarded President Cramblet on August 10th with the request that he note any exceptions and file any evidence in behalf of the college within two weeks, or the verdict would be returned upon the testimony submitted by the complainant.*

In the meantime, efforts were made to follow up in various directions the evidence which Professor Croyle had gathered from many sources in submitting his case first to Professor Young and then to Professor Forrest. Wherever tested its accuracy and impartiality seemed pretty well established; but it was generally impossible to extract further information from anyone in a form that could be used in the case. The fact that an official investigation was being made, and that the results would be published, seemed to affect both Professor Croyle's friends and the friends of Bethany very much as many people are affected by the prospect of being called into court as witnesses: the fear of a little publicity or trouble robbed them of all desire to further the ends of justice. Former students and alumni, ex-professors and present members of the faculty, even an occasional Trustee, after having written the most violent and damning things about the college, generally responded to official enquiry that they had nothing to say, or that some one else would be the proper source of information, or that their names must not be used in connection with charges made. While this complicated the problem of getting at the truth, it demonstrated that colleges have far more to fear from irresponsible gossip and petty spite than they have from the most drastic official investigations.

On August 29th, President Cramblet abandoned his attitude of silence and wrote a long letter in which he stated quite fully the case of the college administration on the matters at issue.† This opened the way for the third and most satisfactory stage of the investi-

* See Appendix E.

† See Appendix F, especially first two and last three paragraphs; also G.

gation, the first having been the preliminary enquiry conducted by Professor Young, and the second, the work done by Professor Forrest up to the writing of the tentative report.

The final stages of the investigation might have been concluded much earlier but for the necessity of having a member of the committee visit Bethany to gather up what could be learned there, and afford the college the fullest opportunity to submit its side of the case. That required delay till the Christmas holidays, when the chairman could leave his own work. Pending that visit, the claims made by President Cramblet were followed up by correspondence, as far as possible. December 26 and 27 were spent in Wellsburg and Bethany. The time was not the most favorable for the purpose, as the college was almost deserted by students and faculty, and the absence of Professor Croyle overseas, where he served the expeditionary forces, first as Y. M. C. A. secretary, and afterwards as army chaplain, made it impossible for him to be present. Nevertheless the visit served the essential ends in view. Several present or former members of the faculty were interviewed, and President Cramblet received Professor Forrest quite courteously, and devoted several hours to a patient discussion of the case, answering all questions and entering into all details with entire frankness. After following up the visit by correspondence with several persons, it was possible to conclude the case.

Of necessity, the investigation had to be conducted almost entirely by the chairman of the committee. But the other members were consulted and kept fully informed by correspondence and the submission to them of the main documents. Finally, the chairman's report, together with all the letters and papers accumulated in the course of the enquiry, went to them individually for their independent judgment. Thus the report became that of the committee as a whole.

V. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

Upon all the main issues of the Bethany College case the evidence gathered permits a clear verdict. An examination of the documents appended to this report will show that the major charges are admitted. The only question, therefore, is how far the conditions attending the case and shaping the general life and policy of the college, and the type of institution of which it is an example may be regarded as mitigating circumstances. Like most human problems

it can hardly be justly dismissed with a bare statement of the truth or falsity of the specific charges enumerated in the earlier part of this report. A somewhat detailed discussion of the various phases of the case, therefore, precedes the summing up of the verdict.

In the first place there is not the slightest ground for charging any breach of contract on the part of the college in dismissing Professor Croyle or any other professor at the end of any session. Every member of the faculty, of however many years standing, is employed by the year. There may be, and doubtless usually is, a hope that the relation may become lasting, but no such expectation can give to a professor entering into such a contract the right to complain if it is not renewed at the end of any session. This is particularly true of new men whose first year is necessarily one of probation.

The larger universities practically always avail themselves of the opportunity to try out young men such as Professor Croyle by appointing them as instructors or adjunct professors for one year, and freely drop them if unacceptable or unnecessary for another session. It is not in the interest of efficient teaching to deny the smaller colleges this right, even though they find it necessary to supplement the drawing power of small salaries and obscurity with full professorial rank. The policy, however, of continuing men through a lifetime of service on the same yearly tenure is another matter. It is hard to believe that it is best either for the teacher or the college. Nevertheless, under such a policy Bethany College could be guilty of no breach of express contract even when dropping at the end of a session the professor who had served for a dozen years.

A second item in the indictment may also be thrown out, at least in so far as it relates to two men dropped from the faculty. The names of these gentlemen will not be mentioned because they both declined to appear in the case and wanted only to be left undisturbed in the enjoyment of their present positions without regard to conditions in Bethany. It appears that their cases were quite different from that of Professor Croyle, except that they failed to give satisfaction to the college and so were not re-elected. One of them served for a year and was notified that he would be discontinued unless his second year was more satisfactory. Before the second year ended he made it known that he had accepted another position and hence was not regarded as available for the third year, even if the Trustees had been disposed to reappoint him. Having received

a full year's notice that he was not likely to be retained there was no just ground for complaint on that score.

The same seems to be true with regard to the other professor. He taught four years at Bethany and was reluctantly dropped only because one of his colleagues overwhelmed the Trustees with written and oral testimony of his failure to make his teaching worth while. He also had a full year's notice that he would not be retained.

Thus two of the four cases of alleged violation of academic tenure seem not to be relevant, and the other two men having served under one-year contracts, their dismissal involved no breach of the letter of the law under which they were employed. But in their cases it remains to inquire whether they were given adequate notice of the termination of their services. In Professor Croyle's case President Cramblet considers that the numerous difficulties Professor Croyle had with his classes, the complaints which the President had passed on to him during the session, and a manifest inability to fit into the Bethany environment should have made it evident to Professor Croyle that he would not be re-elected. That seems not to have been the case, however, and official notice was not given Professor Croyle until May 18, or practically at the end of the academic year. In the judgment of this committee that did not constitute a proper notice, and Professor Croyle was justified in regarding it as violation of the rights of a professor.

The other case is at once more complicated and more flagrant. Professor W. B. Taylor was on the faculty of Bethany College for eleven years during all of which time he was Dean of the Ministerial Department, and during ten years he was vice-president of the college. He was a middle-aged man with a large family, and had built a home in Bethany. He knew of no dissatisfaction with his work. Yet about two weeks after the session of 1915-16 had actually ended he received a brief note informing him that the Trustees had not appointed him for the next session. He has never lodged any complaint against the college, though naturally feeling hurt by such treatment, but has remained in the village as a friend of the institution while maintaining himself in business in the neighboring town of Wellsburg.

In explanation of this case President Cramblet states that there had been growing complaints of Professor Taylor as a teacher, and that the action of the Trustees was precipitated by Professor Taylor's having organized a movement to have his colleague, mentioned

above, dropped for inefficiency. The year before this fellow-professor was dropped, and the year both he and Professor Taylor were dropped, the latter is said to have appeared before the Trustees with documents and witnesses to prove the incompetence of his colleague and secure his dismissal. In the end the Trustees concluded that both men were unsatisfactory teachers and dropped them both.*

The complications in the case, therefore, arise from Professor Taylor's having been for years identified with the administration of the college without objection to its methods of handling its professors, and exerting himself at the last to have a fellow-professor dropped in the same summary fashion that marked his own dismissal. But whatever may thus be urged in extenuation on the ground of poetic justice, the dismissal of a professor of eleven years' standing with absolutely no previous notice, is a flagrant violation of a teacher's rights. Granting that the interests of effective teaching dictated that Bethany College should remove Professor Taylor, the least that a proper regard for a professor's rights demanded was one year's notice of intention to discontinue.

The next point for consideration is whether Bethany College afforded opportunity to members of its faculty to state their case or plead their cause before dismissing them. It seems that the course followed with Professors Croyle and Taylor is the general rule,—the Trustees act and send notice of their action, and that is final. It would certainly be in the interests of fairness and good feeling to have the professor appear before the Trustees to say what he cared to in his own behalf before settling his case. It would avoid the possibility of sacrificing him needlessly to mere student dissatisfaction or presidential or professorial jealousy. What it would cost the Trustees in extra time and trouble would be more than made up in good fruits of democracy and fair play in the faculty.

Where there is any question of the precise reasons for dismissal, as in Professor Croyle's case, the importance of giving the man a hearing is clear. He states that he did not suspect he was to be dropped, and charges that his dismissal was due to outside criticism of the nature of his teaching. Neither he nor any representative was heard before the Trustees when he was dropped. Although he was permitted to appear before them later his case was not reconsidered, and he states that Mr. Cochran, President of the Board, refused to enter upon any discussion, beyond saying there were no

* See Appendix H, Fourth.

charges recorded against Professor Croyle, and it was none of his business why he was not reappointed.* President Cramblet says that Mr. Cochran replied to Professor Croyle that he was an unsatisfactory teacher. Perhaps both reports are correct, giving different parts of the same conversation. President Cramblet states in further extenuation of the Trustees' course that the meeting was held during the crowded days of commencement week and that it was impossible for them to enter into any kind of a heresy trial, as Professor Croyle seemed to desire. This seemed to them utterly futile as they had acted against Professor Croyle on the purely practical ground of his limitations as a teacher and his incompatibility of temperament.

It may be added here that the excuse of President Cramblet and others for not giving professors timely notice that they would not be retained is that under a former rule to serve notice six months before the end of the session certain men, one notably, spent the time making trouble for the college. This could be done easily in a very small community like the village of Bethany, and, in such a place, had to be endured rather than raise a worse storm by immediately dismissing the trouble maker. While recognizing the practical difficulties here set forth, the committee, nevertheless, feels that they should not be allowed to stand in the way of the rights of professors to reasonable notice and fair hearing. Such cases should be handled at less hurried times than commencement week, and the teaching staff should not be penalized for the misdeeds of one or two individuals who run amuck. President Cramblet states that the cases dealt with in this report, practically reduced to two, are the only ones laying Bethany open to criticism in the past twenty years. That is to the credit of the college, but again emphasizes the fact that the institution has far more to gain than lose in carefully respecting the rights of its professors.

The president of Bethany thinks the college entitled to much credit, as an offset to any violation of professorial rights, in that it repeatedly allows members of its teaching staff to leave on the briefest sort of notice even after they have signed contracts binding them to stay for the next session. The men taken away from a small college at the end of the session or during vacation are naturally its ablest teachers and can be replaced only with difficulty, if at all. The American Association of University Professors may well

* See Appendix A.

consider this problem and recognize that if a college is to be required to give long notice and follow prescribed processes in freeing itself of undesirable professors, there should also be rules that professors should respect in leaving a college for personal advantage.

In passing now from these questions of academic tenure to that of academic freedom a more difficult phase of the case emerges. Here the question concerns the case of Professor Croyle only, for there is not the slightest suspicion that soundness of teaching was a factor in the cases of the other men. To reduce this matter to its simplest terms it will be best to handle first certain charges urged against Professor Croyle by President Cramblet from the earliest stages of this investigation.

The violent and bitter attitude of President Cramblet towards Professor Croyle arose sometime after the latter left Bethany. It is shared to some extent by certain members of the faculty. Primarily it is due to efforts by Professor Croyle to discredit the college with state boards of education that grant teachers' certificates to Bethany graduates. What he did is seen from the letter he sent the Pennsylvania Board of Education, which, by the way, he was fair enough to send to the committee along with other papers without special request. Although nothing has been said to that effect, the president's bitterness seems also due to Professor Croyle's having brought about the investigation by the Association of University Professors. In this latter course Professor Croyle was clearly within his rights. But in the former action he seems in the wrong, particularly as he did not make sure of his facts, and his course might have injured many innocent former students of the college. Considering the sense of injustice under which he was smarting and the uncertainties of his future, and keeping in mind his previous and subsequent good character and gentlemanly conduct, the committee thinks President Cramblet unduly sweeping in his violent condemnation of Professor Croyle's unjustifiable action. But the committee has no desire to defend, in any way, a vengeful attack upon a college by any professor. It must, however, be clearly pointed out that this had nothing whatever to do with Professor Croyle's dismissal from Bethany, for it was subsequent to that event. President Cramblet's own letter of commendation is sufficient proof that at the time he was dropped Professor Croyle was regarded as a man of high Christian character.* Justification of

* See Appendix G.

Bethany's course cannot arise from any reprehensible act later committed by the dismissed professor.

As to the actual reasons for Professor Croyle's dismissal the evidence is somewhat conflicting, although it is possible to reach a clear enough verdict. President Cramblet and Professors Workman and Hover lay emphasis upon Professor Croyle's failure as a teacher and his inability to fit into Bethany life harmoniously. It must be kept in mind that Bethany is a very small village, with a single church and practically no inhabitants outside the college community and a very few people who serve it. The Croyles came from a larger outside world with the critical impatience of young people fresh from college and seminary. They seem to have caused considerable disturbance by disregarding social conventions and openly criticising conservative views and institutions. "Incompatibility of temperament" seems to sum up the matter of their relations to the village and the college. Taken along with failure to hold classes together and satisfy students, this is said to have made discontinuance certain, entirely aside from any question of orthodoxy. President Cramblet seems not to have regarded these matters as very serious in themselves, and justifies his high commendation of Professor Croyle* for another position in a different environment on the ground that many things taken seriously in Bethany would be no impediment elsewhere, and others a young man might easily correct.

On the other hand, Professor Croyle thinks he was dropped because he taught the Bible from the modern critical view, and the Bethany administration and constituency would not tolerate what they call "destructive criticism." That there is evidence in support of this is clear upon looking over the documents and considering the recent history of Bethany College. Indeed it will be seen that President Cramblet admits that Professor Croyle would not have been retained at Bethany on this account, although he was actually dropped because of the practical objections noted above and would not have been retained had he been "the soundest teacher in the world."

The president put it thus in his letter to Dean Todd, "He has a little too much of the new theology for us at Bethany,"* or as he wrote Professor Young, "He said a lot of things in classes and in addresses which did injury to the college." Professor Croyle states that when he interviewed President Cramblet as to the reasons

*See Appendix D.

why he was not retained the latter answered, "It was because I was teaching 'Higher Criticism' and 'Destructive Criticism' in my Old Testament classes. . . . That the Trustees of Bethany would not stand for a modern interpretation of the Bible; that they would cease to support the college financially if such teaching were tolerated."*

Professor W. R. Walker of Bethany wrote Professor Croyle to the same effect, in a letter approving the course of the college, "That you were not re-employed is true, and your position on controverted critical questions was the reason, as I was informed. . . . I have good reason to believe that the faith of more than one student would have been destroyed had it not been for their coming to me with their trouble. You certainly cannot be ignorant of the fact that your teaching was responsible for so large a per cent of your students leaving your classes at the end of the first semester."† He also followed up his former colleague by writing to a preacher who was a zealous opponent of "destructive criticism" in the state where Professor Croyle found a new professorship. The preacher later took up the matter and wrote, "Now in regard to the man you have with you I will say that Professor W. R. Walker of Bethany College told me that he had been dismissed because of destructive criticism."

To the same effect is the evidence presented in the appendix in extracts from the letters of Mr. Russell Errett, a trustee of Bethany and guiding spirit of "The Christian Standard," and the Rev. George P. Rutledge, editor of the same denominational weekly.

While at Bethany Professor Forrest asked Mr. J. V. Balch, a professor when Professor Croyle was there, but since resigned, whether failure to re-elect Professor Croyle was due to ill success as a teacher or to lack of orthodoxy, and his opinion was that the latter was the real cause. Also Professor H. L. Calhoun who succeeded Professor Croyle said, when interviewed, that he thought he was better able to give the real reason than President Cramblet, and that undoubtedly Professor Croyle was dismissed because he was a destructive critic. It is only fair to add that Professor Calhoun went to Bethany from a sister college because it refused to dismiss its president and four or five of its professors on heresy charges which he preferred, and that his zeal for orthodoxy probably has led

* See Appendix A.

† See Appendix B.

him to stress that matter to the exclusion of others which President Cramblet has emphasized.

How far the other matters grew out of Professor Croyle's radicalism in teaching it is difficult to determine. President Cramblet told, when interviewed at Bethany, of being called one night to the girls' dormitory because a number of them were weeping and well-nigh hysterical over an explanation Professor Croyle had given them in class of the opening verses of the sixth chapter of Genesis. The interpretation was in accord with practically all modern critical commentaries. Also Professor Walker evidently believes, as does Professor Croyle, that the reason students left or refused to enter his classes was that he was a "destructive critic," and not merely an ineffective teacher.

The question here arising involves more than this particular case. It is whether the dismissal of a professor from a church college for teaching out of harmony with the beliefs and wishes of its constituents and management can be construed as a breach of academic freedom.

Upon this question the views of the American Association of University Professors are perfectly clear. Professor Young thus wrote Professor Forrest when asking him to serve on the investigating committee, "Of course, our association does not attempt to impose any standards of scholarship upon denominational colleges." Later to the same effect, "The important point, it seems to me, is not whether Bethany College accepts the results of modern scholarship, nor even whether it permits real freedom of research and of teaching."

Let it, therefore, be clearly noted that the Association makes no attempt to dictate what type of religious or philosophical or political thought shall be taught in American colleges. But it does emphatically insist that any college that proposes to require its professors to keep their research and teaching within prescribed limits, on pain of dismissal, shall make that clear to them when they are appointed. The views just quoted above are all qualified by the strongest assertions of the duty of colleges to the general public, their students, and especially their professors in this particular. Assuming, then, for the moment that questions of orthodoxy had some bearing on the case, the enquiry upon this point resolves itself into a question whether Bethany College let Professor Croyle know in advance that he must limit his biblical teaching to any particular type of thought.

The charges lodged against him cover methods of historical and literary criticism of the Bible common to no particular religious communion. Practically all denominations are divided into radical and conservative wings upon such questions, and that is emphatically true of the Disciples. Hence it would be impossible to know in advance of specific information whether any congregation or college in the brotherhood would require a particular type of teaching on such questions.

Professor Croyle holds that he had explicit assurance when he accepted the call to Bethany that he would have complete freedom to teach the Bible as his conscience and reason dictated. "From the Bethany College Bulletin and statements made by the president I was led to believe that I should have perfect freedom of scholarship in my classes." Again: "I was given to understand that the institution wanted a man in this department who was up to date in his methods and constructive in his work." The statements in the college catalog upon which he relied were such as the following, "Bethany seeks the latest and best results of modern scholarship without becoming an advocate of the vagaries or opinions of any school of thought." The questions of "authorship, time, and place of writing" the books of the Bible are investigated. "The latest results of Archeology are used in an attempt to understand the vitality of the Prophetic Activity." That Professor Croyle was not mistaken in his recollection of what he was told, nor unwarranted in reaching the conclusions he did from catalog statements he regards as corroborated by a letter from Dean Todd to him on June 1, 1917, "In talking with President Cramblet before you assumed your duties, I asked him if you would be permitted freedom in your teaching. I concluded from what he said that you would."*

Certainly Bethany had no reason to expect that Professor Croyle would interpret the statements of its president and catalog otherwise than as he did, nor teach in any spirit other than that he followed. He was not a graduate of Bethany, but of another college not above suspicion by the ultra-orthodox of the denomination. His graduate work had been recently finished at Columbia and Union Theological Seminary which would be considered hotbeds of "destructive criticism" by the men who later objected to Professor Croyle's teaching. The evidence shows that he taught substantially as he had been taught in the institutions whose

* See Appendix A, and Bethany College Catalog 1915-16.

instruction and degrees must have been almost the sole criterion by which his fitness for a chair at Bethany was decided by President Cramblet. To the mind of Professor W. R. Walker, his offence was in teaching "the theories of Kent, Driver, and others of like thinking." The text-books of those men are so widely used in schools, colleges, and even Sunday Schools that a young graduate of Union Seminary could hardly be expected to regard them as destructive.

Nevertheless, after reviewing Bethany's past history of consistent adherence to the conservative views of its denomination, and giving its president credit for the most elementary honesty in statements he has made, the committee is of the opinion that Professor Croyle might have known in advance what he seems to have realized only later to his sorrow, namely, that to Bethany a Bible teacher "up to date in his methods and constructive in his work" and free from "the vagaries or opinions of any school of thought" meant only a conservative of the type of those who preceded him, were his colleagues, and have succeeded him. He and his friends used words in one sense and the Bethany people used them in another, with inevitable misunderstanding. Since that time the college has revised its catalog and taken out the sentences cited by Professor Croyle. It contains at least one statement indicating that it views all modern critical biblical scholarship of the type popularly called higher criticism as "destructive criticism." As indicated above, it has employed Professor Calhoun and another professor from the same institution because of their conservative orthodoxy, their salaries, in fact, being paid by men of the denomination who would tolerate nothing else. While it is now catering more pronouncedly than ever to that wing of its church, there is nothing in its past history to indicate that it intended to lead Professor Croyle to believe that he could follow a different course at Bethany.

Without in any sense approving the attitude of Bethany College in this respect, the committee thinks the college has always made its position reasonably clear to its professors, and that there has been no breach of the implied terms of the understanding accepted.

Reducing the above findings to brief summary statements we get the following:

1. There was no breach of contract with Professor Croyle or others, since Bethany College employs all professors upon a one-year tenure.

2. That in the case of Professors Taylor and Croyle serious injustice was done by sending notice of non-election at the end of the session.

3. That Professor Croyle was not granted a hearing as to cause of non-election prior to action by the Trustees, and they refused to go into his case when he later appeared before them.

4. That while Bethany College does not allow freedom in biblical teaching, and admits that it would have refused to re-elect Professor Croyle because of the content of his teaching, it seems to have acted largely upon other grounds; and in view of its long established position on biblical criticism the restrictions put upon its professors in that department may fairly be presumed to be known to and accepted by those who accept professorships.

VI. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

Several of the members of the academic freedom and academic tenure standing committee expressed the opinion that an investigation of Bethany College would hardly be justified unless it could be regarded as a type, and used as a sort of text for general suggestions to a whole class of institutions. In the hope of making this report constructive and helpful towards a solution of some of the many problems of college administration, these observations and suggestions are added. Except where the remarks are obviously concerned with matters at Bethany College they are to be regarded as applying to the class of institutions rather than to that particular college.

Higher education in America owes much to the type of institutions to which Bethany belongs, and no inconsiderable amount to that college itself. The small church colleges of our country were almost invariably the first institutions of higher education in the various districts of the United States. Bethany was practically a pioneer for its region in 1841 when it opened its doors to students, and the men and women there trained have been a potent factor within and beyond the denomination to which it belongs.

On the part of some state universities and a few other very large institutions of learning, there has developed a feeling of suspicion as to the real value of ordinary church colleges educationally, and of the sincerity with which they live up to professed standards of scholarship, and devote themselves to the unbiassed pursuit of knowledge. But despite the low standards of a few of them and the shifty methods that some of the weakest resort to in their efforts to

* The publication of these general recommendations has been approved by Committee A, but they have not been discussed at a meeting of the General Committee, and the Committee of Inquiry alone is responsible for them.

survive, the denominational colleges, as a class, are worthy of encouragement and praise. Many of their most glaring faults are merely "ancient good become uncouth," being things that were in harmony with the best standards and practices of all colleges not long ago. Their growth and adaptability have sometimes been retarded solely by lack of funds. Even so, it would be hard to point to any fault of theirs which is not matched in some institutions of other classes, and often with less excuse. The opinion of some educators that it is useless to expect independent and scientific teaching in such colleges is not shared by this committee. On the whole, church politics is not more likely to hamper independence in colleges controlled by churches than is state politics to shackle state-supported schools.

In reconstructing our country now that the war is over there will be need of every college of every sort at all worthy the name. With the overwhelming demand upon state colleges for vocational training, and scientific and technical education for young soldiers and wounded men and hosts of others imperatively demanded to rebuild a physically wrecked world, what we call humanistic studies may be overshadowed. The institutions that are simply colleges, able to devote themselves to the general education of undergraduates, will be indispensable to the nation and to the church. But they cannot fulfil their mission, or even live, if they hide intellectual barrenness behind pious pretensions, and stand out as the last petty strongholds of autocracy in a world of democracy. They must be genuine seats of learning, and the rights of students and faculties must not be trodden upon by despotic administrators.

One of the most serious problems confronting American colleges is the recruiting of their faculties. The demand for men elsewhere at high salaries is unprecedented. The pay of professors, notoriously inadequate long before the war, can make no appeal to men. Colleges that have been in the habit of "hiring" professors for a year at a time, paying them less than a brick-layer could make, and discharging them without notice or explanation, will search in vain for men worth even a year's tenure. Only freedom of thought and speech, prospect of life tenure, dignity of position, and immunity from despotism will so supplement the salaries available as to attract worthy men to professorships.

The administration of Bethany and its type is neither better nor worse, in principle, than that of many other colleges. They are

nearly all, big and little in America, despotic in government, being better or worse only as the depotism chances to be benevolent or malevolent. The boards are self-perpetuating, or are political appointees; almost in no case is the faculty represented upon them, and commonly the alumni have no voice in their selection. As men busy with their private affairs trustees are necessarily ignorant of the real problems of academic administration and educational principle. The result is that they must usually follow the policy of the president, who, for practical purposes, becomes the autocrat of the institution. Where he is an educational expert and a man patient and courteous alike under criticism and under full co-operation, all will go well. But when he unites the spirit with the power of an autocrat, has no fitness for his task but that of a successful promoter or approved money getter, and under the slightest opposition becomes violent and tyrannical, all will go ill.

It is a misfortune of the undemocratic nature of college government that the faculties and alumni are often restless and critical when there are few abuses to justify it. The administration is thus the victim of its own evil genius. In the course of this investigation, for example, correspondence with alumni and former professors brought out a volume of complaint and abuse of the Bethany administration that would be most astonishing to persons who had not met the like in the case of numerous other colleges. It was no part of the task of this committee to verify or disprove such charges, hence they will not be repeated here. But under an administration more representative and responsible the alleged evils would be corrected, if real, and, if not justly grounded, would not continue to be urged to the discredit of the college. The administration would be overthrown, or it would be sustained. Either way the result would be good. In a small college with very limited means at its command it is difficult enough at best to maintain a stable faculty; yet the lack of it is a well nigh fatal handicap. If Bethany had no other reason to change its methods of dealing with its faculty it could find sufficient ground for doing so in the fact that out of a total of eighteen professors listed in its 1915-16 catalog only seven were on its faculty for 1918-19.

Religious communions with which colleges are affiliated would do well to appoint commissions, or use their existing Boards of Education, to make a careful study of college administration. They can learn much from a comparative study of the various church colleges.

The criticisms of a number of institutions investigated and reported upon by the Association of University Professors, and the recommendations of the Association concerning college administration will reveal to them the things faculties want. A desire to make colleges true nurseries of democracy and of the spirit of honest inquiry should be the guiding principle.

The matter of academic freedom or freedom of thought and speech and research in church colleges merits further discussion here. That it does not exist anywhere absolutely without limitations, required only the war to demonstrate. Religious institutions have not been slow to claim that if colleges generally had the right summarily to dismiss professors whose utterances were adjudged perilous to the nation in time of war, church colleges have the same right with respect to teachers who attack the foundations of faith and imperil the most sacred convictions, or even the immortal souls of men. To men as deeply stirred by this as good citizens are by treason there is no rejoinder. Therefore, as has been conceded above, colleges have a right to set bounds to freedom if they will be open and honest about it, not trying to gain in one direction the advantages of loyalty to denominational standards, while at the same time striving to reap elsewhere the rewards of complete independence.

With respect to the peculiar tenets of a denomination that differentiate it from other sects, hardly more is required than to let the affiliation of the college be known. The burden of proof would certainly rest upon the professor who would claim he entered the faculty of such a college believing he would be free to try to overthrow the doctrines and practices of its supporting denomination. But it is a less simple and obvious affair if restrictions affect matters upon which there is no consensus of general Christian faith or uniform denominational adherence. In such cases the burden of proof should be upon the college that it has clearly informed men of their restrictions when accepting professorships.

To instance Bethany College again, although it was given the benefit of the doubt as to responsibility for Professor Croyle's trouble because he taught modern critical views of the Bible, the existence of the doubt was indicated. It would be better for the college, in future, to leave nothing, upon which its own denomination is divided, to be inferred by a young professor, especially if his previous training has been in institutions universally known to be at variance with Bethany's views. While that applies notably to

professors in the biblical department or School of Religion, it extends also to the teachers of the college proper. Bethany is now enjoying exceptional advantages, both financial and otherwise, because it has accepted professors whose conservatism impelled them to attack the views of their colleagues in a sister college and resign from it when the other professors were not dismissed. Manifestly neither they nor the men paying their salaries would tolerate at Bethany what was found intolerable elsewhere. While conceding to the college the right to profit to the fullest extent from this, fairness demands that it make clear to present and prospective members of its faculty whatever limitations and restrictions this course imposes upon academic freedom.

A letter written by Professor Hover states that the college allows him complete freedom in teaching biology. To make concrete the duty of the college to be absolutely fair and open in its wholehearted loyalty to the views that have gained it several professors and considerable money and not a few students, let it be stated that its administration should decide and announce in advance how it would deal with its professor of biology if his teaching on the evolution and development of life should run counter to ancient biblical statements. The same course should be followed with respect to geology and other sciences. If it chances that in Bethany biology and geology and Genesis are all in accord now, the danger of future conflict, upon a change of professors, must be apparent to all who know how scientists are at present trained. Hence the obligation to deal frankly with the supporters of the college, and also to safeguard the faculty from the unhappy results of a failure to adopt and announce a course determined by fixed principles. Nothing could well be more reprehensible than for any church college to sacrifice its principles for the sake of gain.

To sum up and supplement these recommendations the following conclusions are appended:

1. Church colleges should fully and unequivocally inform the public and their professors of all restrictions that their tenets impose upon academic freedom.
2. The Boards of Trustees of colleges should formulate their rules for dealing with their faculties to insure fairness of treatment, and such security of position as will promote stability without sacrificing efficiency.
3. The Boards of Trustees should undertake such reorganization of college administration as will give the alumni and faculty representation upon the governing body, while not sacrificing the control of constituencies that furnish financial support and students.

4. In view of the unfairness of some colleges to their faculties, self-respecting teachers should make it a rule to enquire carefully into the character of institutions calling them, and into the treatment accorded the professors they are invited to succeed.

5. The Board of Education of the Disciples of Christ should investigate the status of academic tenure and academic freedom in all the colleges affiliated with it and seek to promote conditions worthy of Christian and democratic institutions.

6. The Council of Church Boards of Education could render valuable service to the cause of Christian education by a careful study of academic freedom and tenure, with a view to issuing to all affiliated boards a statement of correct procedure for denominational Colleges.

W. M. FORREST, *Chairman.*

G. D. HANCOCK.

APPENDIX A

H. I. CROYLE TO A. A. YOUNG, SEPTEMBER 6, 1917

In July, 1916, I was called to the professorship of Old Testament and Hebrew in Bethany College with the tacit understanding that I would be given academic freedom in my classroom work and that I should have a permanent place on the faculty of their growing institution. I was given to understand that the institution wanted a man in this department who was up to date in his methods and constructive in his work. This in substance is the way President Cramblet presented the proposition to me and to this end I arranged my courses. I was further encouraged in this by the statement on page 48 of the 1916 Bethany College Bulletin which says "Bethany seeks the latest and best results of modern scholarship without becoming an advocate of the vagaries or opinions of any school of thought." And again on page 50 of the same bulletin in describing a course in Hebrew Prophecy, which I taught, reads as follows: "The prophets of the Pre-Assyrian and Assyrian periods are studied with a careful survey of Assyrian and Babylonian History as a background. The latest results of Archaeology are used in an attempt to understand the vitality of the Prophetic Activity." President Cramblet also told others that I should have freedom of scholarship. I am in receipt of a letter from J. C. Todd, Dean of the Bloomington Bible Chair at Indiana University in which he stated June 1, 1917: "In talking with President Cramblet before you assumed your duties, I asked if you would be permitted freedom in your teaching. I conclude from what he said that you would. However, I feared that Bethany would not be entirely ready for the type of teaching you would do."

About Thanksgiving President Cramblet called me into his office and said that he had had a letter from Rev. Mansell of Warren, Ohio, in which he objected to some of the questions raised in my course in Old Testament concerning which his daughter, Katherine, had written him. At this time President Cramblet told me that he wanted me to teach the Bible as the Word of God and not as History to which I replied that the course assumed the authenticity of the scriptures and it was so taught.

Along in February, 1917, President Cramblet mailed me the following letter without comment:

EAST LIVERPOOL, Ohio, Feb. 9, 1917.

DR. T. E. CRAMBLET,
Bethany, W. Va.

Dear Sir and Brother: The official board of the First Church of Christ this city has directed me as Clerk of the Church to address you concerning the teaching of one of the Biblical professors of Bethany College.

The rumor has reached us from different quarters that Professor Croyle teaches some things contrary to the accepted teachings of the Bible. Especially that Adam was not a real person but only a mythological character; that Genesis is not authentic history but merely allegory. As a board we feel that we should not have that sort of teaching in our colleges. We had voted to give half of our educational offerings to Bethany College, but are holding them back pending some definite assurance that the College does not countenance false teaching. Our offerings are very small and would not matter much to the College, but it is our desire to give the little we do contribute to institutions that teach the truth. Will you kindly advise us in this matter?

Very cordially yours,

C. H. WATSON, *Church Clerk.*

As far as the above letter concerns me and my teaching it is a bald libel and false in its implications and inferences. Never at any time was I interviewed in regard to any of my courses by anyone, nor did anyone object to me to anything that I taught in my classes either in person or in writing except the talk I had with President Cramblet about Thanksgiving time.

On May 18, 1917, I received the following letter from President Cramblet, the first intimation that I was not to be retained next year:

BETHANY, West Va., May 18, 1917.

PROF. H. I. CROYLE,
Bethany, W. Va.

Dear Prof. Croyle: At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee, of the Trustees of Bethany College, I was instructed to express to you the thanks of the Trustees and to say that we regret that we are unable to retain your services for the coming year. I am asked to assure you of the good wishes of the members of the Committee and to thank you for the work you have done for the College.

Very truly yours,

T. E. CRAMBLET.

Upon receipt of the above letter I immediately called upon President Cramblet and asked the cause of the above action. He told me that it was because I was teaching "Higher Criticism" and "destructive criticism" in my Old Testament courses. He told me that he had received any number of letters of complaint from various people. When I tried to get him to give me definite instances of complaint he could only cite two. One was that of Rev. Walter Mansell of Warren, Ohio, and another that of an old superannuated minister at Washington, who had repeated some things he had heard Mr. Mansell say who was his former pastor at Washington. I am giving herewith a copy of letter I received from Mr. Mansell in reply to my inquiry to him as to his objections to my teaching.

(Mr. Mansell's letter explains that he felt that "Your teachings of the Old Book are not the best for the young student.")

When I called upon President Cramblet after receiving notification of my not being retained he said that the action of the Executive Committee was not upon his recommendation. He said that he liked me personally and that the other members of the Faculty spoke well of me, but that the Trustees of Bethany

would not stand for a modern interpretation of the Bible, that they would cease to support the College financially if such teaching were tolerated. He also told me that I could talk to the Trustees about it when they were there at Commencement. At Commencement I asked the Trustees to explain their action, as I had received no previous complaints in regard to my teaching and that the President did not recommend my dismissal. I requested that they show cause for my dismissal and reason for not notifying me earlier in the year in order that I might have a chance to secure a position elsewhere. M. M. Cochran, chairman of the Executive Committee said in session of the Trustees that there were no charges entered against me and that it was not any of my business why I was not retained and that it wasn't their custom to notify their professors that they elected or dismissed until Commencement.

These are the facts of the case. The report you receive from Bethany College if it is true, should coincide very closely with this. Rather than send you a large bundle of letters, for convenience, I have copied them and included them in this document.

APPENDIX B

W. R. WALKER, PROFESSOR IN BETHANY COLLEGE, TO H. I. CROYLE, OCTOBER 1, 1917

In reply to your recent letter I would say that I did answer an inquiry of Brother Book as to the reason for your not being re-employed at Bethany. I did not say you were dismissed, for my understanding is that the trustees fulfilled their contract with you.

That you were not re-employed is true, and your position on controverted critical questions was the reason, as I was informed.

I did not suppose there could be any doubt in your mind on that question. The speech of Mr. Cochran on Commencement day would have been sufficient to enable any one to see the situation.

Brother Jobs told me he personally enlightened you on the cause of their refusal to employ you again. I also know that letters sent to the college by complaining parents, dissatisfied with the teaching their children were receiving in your room, were sent to you, that you might learn the attitude of the School's patrons.

If you desire to cavil about the term "destructive," it is not worth our time to exchange correspondence about that. I have not known any man who would confess that he was that sort of critic.

I will say, however, that if I taught the theories of Kent, Driver and others of like thinking, leading the student to understand that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that the so-called Law of Moses was a forgery worked off on gullible people by Hilkiah or Josiah, and that all the similar subjective history was true, I would be a destructive critic, and think I would acknowledge the title. I know such teaching destroys faith in the Bible as the Word of God. Several students came to me from your classes with these doubts raised in their minds, and it took me some hours at different times to counteract the teaching and show that it was purely a subjective theory, without a semblance of historical fact on which to rest, yet the statements made in presenting the theory were stated as historical. I was able to show them all, I think, how illogical such theories were, especially when

dealing with supposed history. I have good reason to believe that the faith of more than one student would have been destroyed had it not been for their coming to me with their trouble.

You certainly cannot be ignorant of the fact that your teaching was responsible for so large a per cent of your students leaving your classes at the end of the first semester. More would have dropped your classes if they could have found other subjects at those periods.

If such teaching is not destructive, I know not how to designate it. If my teaching imperiled the faith of a student, I would have the honor to cease teaching. I had regard for you as a man until after I learned of your writing State Boards of Education to discredit Bethany College, whereupon I cared to have nothing more to do with you than was decently necessary. I certainly cannot approve that sort of spirit.

APPENDIX C

H. I. CROYLE TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, HARRISBURG, PA.,
JULY 16, 1917

I notice in the Bethany College Bulletin, Bethany, West Virginia, that graduates of Bethany College may teach in the public schools of your state without taking the usual teachers' examination. I should like to know if this is a true statement, and, if so, on what basis Bethany College is given this standing.

I have been on the Faculty of Bethany College the past year and I question the worthiness of the institution to such privileges as it is run at present. As to library facilities in the field of education, as well as other fields, she practically has none; a dozen books would practically exhaust the list of the books on education.

I should be glad to have you state the requirements of a College to be admitted to your approved list for the training of teachers.

APPENDIX D

T. E. CRAMBLET TO J. C. TODD, DEAN, INDIANA SCHOOL OF RELIGION,
BLOOMINGTON, JUNE 5, 1917

I have your letter of the 2nd inst., inquiring about Professor H. I. Croyle. Professor Croyle is a graduate of Drake and has an A.M. from Columbia and also has a B.D. from Union Theological Seminary. He is a gentleman of the highest character. His educational advantages have been the very best. He has a little too much of the new theology for us at Bethany. I feel very sure, however, that when he has had a little time to adjust himself that he will be all right. In my judgment, he would make an excellent man for your work at Bloomington. I do not know where you would be able to find any one better suited to your needs than Professor Croyle.

APPENDIX E

W. M. FORREST TO T. E. CRAMBLET, AUGUST 19, 1918
(No reply having been received to preceding letter)

I am sending you herewith a brief of the case against the administration of Bethany as investigated by the American Association of University Professors in

connection with the dismissal of Professor Croyle. It is to be regretted that we have not been able to get from the administration any co-operation in our efforts to investigate this case. But your failure to reply in any way to the latest efforts made in that direction leaves us with the conclusion that the College desires to make no answer to the charges preferred.

However, before closing the case and publishing the findings of the Investigating Committee, this brief of charges made, evidence submitted, and conclusions drawn is laid before you. After looking it over, if you deem any of the conclusions to be unwarranted by the facts we shall be glad, even at this late date, to receive and weigh any evidence you can submit in rebuttal. If you do not reply within two weeks, it will be concluded that you do not care to do so, and the report of the committee will be finished in harmony with the digest of evidence herewith submitted.

APPENDIX F

T. E. CRAMBLET TO W. M. FORREST, AUGUST 29, 1918.

I have your letter of the 10th inst. and in reply beg to say that I am very much surprised that men who make such loud professions of fairness, as you and your Committee do, should themselves be so unfair as to write such a report as the one you submitted to me. You wrote me a time or two that you would come to Bethany and investigate the matters which you evidently believe your superior wisdom qualifies you to judge. You failed to come to Bethany as you promised, and instead of this have trumped up a lot of charges that would put Ananias and Sapphira to shame. There is scarcely a statement in your entire report that is accurate or true. I do not believe that any fair committee of gentlemen possessed of the highest honor would write a report such as you have written without making fullest investigation.

You make charges about treatment of Professors —, — and —, without even a word of inquiry from us and without giving us any opportunity to reply to what you say. Then with just one charge, and that clearly unproven, you proceed to denounce Bethany College, saying the institution is in no sense modern and that its action is fatal to scientific research. The refusal of our Board of Trustees to re-elect a man who was clearly proven to be an incompetent teacher, you conclude justifies you in making false charges.

If your report can influence your clique they should by all means have it. I confess, however, that I can not reconcile your report with the action of fair minded, honorable, Christian gentlemen. Let us take up your charges in the order in which they come:

First: It is not true that we dismissed Croyle near the end of the session with no previous notice. As early as the holidays I called him into my office and told him his work was not satisfactory and that there was a constant complaint from his students. At the beginning of the second semester, in February, one entire class in Old Testament History refused positively to receive instruction from him on the ground that he was dull and uninteresting and that the students received nothing in return for the time spent in his classes. At that time our Professor Johnson was compelled to leave college on account of illness. Croyle then asked that he be allowed to take the class in Psychology, which Professor Johnson had

been teaching, since there were no students left in his Old Testament History class. When the class learned that Mr. Croyle was to teach the subject, practically every member came to my office and made protest, not only to me, but to the two Deans of the College as well. I called the class together, explained to them that we had no one else to teach the subject then, and urged them to give Croyle a trial. I explained to Mr. Croyle at the time that this objection was being made by the students.

Later on, in the month of March, a patron of the College, one of our strong preachers, whose daughter was a student with us, wrote me a very strong letter denouncing the teaching of Croyle. I called him into my office, showed him the letter, told him that he was injuring the College, and intimated to him that we could not retain him. About the same time another letter came from the Church in East Liverpool, Ohio, stating that, while an offering had been taken for education in the First Church and that this offering rightly belonged to Bethany, yet it could not be sent here so long as we had a man like Croyle in a chair. It was generally agreed in faculty that no more incompetent teacher had attempted to fill one of our chairs. I am willing to admit that Croyle had educational advantages and that he probably was in a way an educated man.

Furthermore, Croyle's wife was a disturber of the peace here at Bethany and arrayed herself a number of times in direct hostility to the College work and the College programmes.

It is not true that Croyle was dismissed at the end of the term without warning. Beginning with the holiday season he received repeated warnings, both from myself and through the protests that were made by students and patrons of the College. If there is a committee which feels that it can bind on Bethany College a man of this caliber, all I have to say is that this committee needs a little more common sense. . . .

Fourth:* It is true that after eleven years of service in Bethany, Professor W. B. Taylor was not re-elected for the twelfth year. I am very sure that Dr. H. L. Willett, who knew in Chicago Professor Taylor, can clearly understand this. There never was a criticism of Professor Taylor's doctrinal position. He was in harmony, so far as we knew, with the position of the Disciples generally. There was criticism of his teaching ability for a number of years. The year before he left us some of our very best students, when they found that they must continue their studies under Professor Taylor in order to graduate, left us and went elsewhere. One of these, considered the brightest young man in the Junior Class, announced to a dozen people that he was leaving for this reason. During Professor Taylor's last year here a goodly number of the Junior and Senior ministerial students held a number of meetings to discuss Professors Taylor and —. In one of their meetings they agreed that they would leave Bethany if Professor Taylor was retained as head of the Bible Department. This company of students sent one of its number, as a committee, to Uniontown, Pa., to interview Mr. M. M. Cochran, chairman of our Executive Committee, and one of the most generous and interested of our Trustees. This Committee insisted that the ministe-

* Sections 2 and 3, as dealing with the cases of the two professors dropped out of discussion, are omitted.

rial students of Bethany were entitled to more efficient teaching than they were receiving. To add to the difficulty of the situation Professors Taylor and — were not friends. Each was plotting the other's dismissal. Each was bringing to me report after report detrimental to the other. At the meeting of the Trustees the year before Professor Taylor was not re-elected, he brought several witnesses before the Committee of the Trustees to show that Professor —, because of his inability to teach, was injuring the College and therefore should not be retained. When Professor — learned that Professor Taylor was carrying on this campaign against him he began to marshal his friends in an attack upon Professor Taylor. Our Board of Trustees, when the situation was brought clearly before it, acted in the wisest manner in relieving both of the gentlemen. There is much more that might be said here, but certainly this is enough to show any reasonable committee that our Board of Trustees was acting clearly within its rights and within the bounds of justice when it refused to re-elect these men. Certainly the interest of the student body and of the College itself is to be considered above any other.

Fifth: It is true that our professors here are elected for one year only. It is understood, however, that tenure of office is to continue as long as professors give satisfaction. There should be no power on earth to compel a Board of Trustees to hold men who are making a record like Professor Croyle, hurtful and injurious to students and college. No Board of Trustees should need a year or two to further try out such men. I beg to say, in this connection, that the men who compose our Board of Trustees have as high a standard of honor and are as decent in their procedure generally as your Committee has been. They are gentlemen who stand as high in every way as you do, to say the least for them.

Sixth: It is true that I gave Professor Croyle a recommendation, but I beg to call your attention to the fact that nowhere in this recommendation did I say that Professor Croyle was an inspiring or successful teacher. At the time I believed him to be a gentleman of high character. It is true that his educational advantages were the best. It was also true, in my judgment, at that time, that the Bible chair at Bloomington, Indiana, could not find one then better suited to its needs, because the work there was different, in character, from ours. When I wrote that recommendation I did not know that Mr. Croyle was capable of anything so despicable as he was guilty of later on. He wrote malicious lies to the departments of public instruction in Pennsylvania and some other States, in an attempt to injure the College and our graduates. The State Superintendent of Schools of Pennsylvania, Dr. Shaffer, sent me Mr. Croyle's letter. I made copies of this letter and sent it to some of our Trustees and to the members of our Faculty. I can prove by witnesses, in any number desired, that every statement in Professor Croyle's letter to these superintendents was a falsehood. Dr. Shaffer in his letter of inquiry to me, when he sent Croyle's letter, intimated in a very gentle way that he understood. This letter of Mr. Croyle's was exactly in keeping with the conduct of the discharged hired hand who poisons horses and cows and burns down buildings attempting to get even. That your committee, composed of professedly honorable gentlemen, should take up the cause of a man guilty of an act like this goes beyond my comprehension.

Your statement that it appears that outside pressure on the Administration of the College, from editors, ministers, and others in the conservative wing of the

denomination with which Bethany is affiliated compelled the College to dismiss Croyle because he was a higher critic is also false. The Trustees gathered their own information and acted on it. This charge is wholly gratuitous and is also without foundation. Had Professor Croyle been the soundest of men, had he held to every contention of the "conservative wing of the denomination with which Bethany is affiliated" he would not have been kept on our Faculty. It is true that there was complaint regarding his doctrinal teaching, but the greatest charge came from the students to the effect that Croyle was uninteresting and incompetent as a teacher. It is also true, and you may publish it as widely as you desire, that we do not want and will not have, on our Faculty, men that are known to be false to the Word of God.

How does it happen that out of four professors not retained by us during the last five or six years, the charge is made that only one of them was dismissed because of his orthodoxy, and that with this as a basis you reach the conclusion and propose to announce to the world that Bethany's course is "fatal to scientific research and sure ultimately to deprive a college of true scholars upon its faculty." Such conclusions are absurd in the extreme and any set of men who announce such to the world and make an unwarranted attack upon a college are guilty of a greater breach of good order than any violation of college ethics as you here charge. When you reach the conclusion that, because our Trustees dismissed a man like Croyle from our teaching force, that Bethany is in no proper sense "a modern college," you show yourself to be just what a whole lot of people know you are. If I were you, with a record like yours, before our Brotherhood, I would not climb on a housetop and proclaim that colleges which are faithful to their trust, doing the work of the church and receiving the approval of the brethren by a constantly growing and liberal patronage, are in no proper sense "modern" and that their course is fatal to "scientific research." When you publish to the world your report I beg to assure you that I may be able to publish a report on your good self and your wonderful (?) work,—a report that may have as large a reading as yours and that may be as interesting reading.*

Permit me to say further that I do not believe for one moment in your sincerity in this whole matter. I believe you are actuated by selfish motives, the motive of the propagandist abroad in the land,—a desire to injure Bethany College which continues to stand, loyal to the Restoration Movement of the Disciples. I do not believe you can injure us. In fact, I believe that the louder you bark, the better it will be for Bethany College.

You may think I am very plain in my statements and that I am somewhat personal. You are making an un-Christian and an uncalled for and an unjustifiable attack on our Board of Trustees, upon myself and upon Bethany College such as you certainly would be ashamed of, if your standards of honor were high enough to enable you to realize it.

APPENDIX G

W. M. FORREST TO T. E. CRAMBLET, SEPTEMBER 6, 1918

Your letter of August 29, aside from its gratuitous insults and foolish threats, is such a statement as the American Association of University Professors has

* It is proper to remark that this means no more than that President Cramblet has heard that Professor Forrest is unsound, as, indeed, he freely admits he is when judged by Bethany standards of Biblical scholarship.—W. M. F.

endeavored to obtain ever since Professor Young first wrote you on July 28, 1917.

Ignoring the offensive features of your letter as irrelevant and self-condemning, I shall try to renew the examination of the case. I hope that after considering my statements you will favor me with a reply confined to a calm discussion of the matters in point.

The brief I sent you was necessarily based entirely upon evidence obtained from accusers of the Bethany Administration. To Professor Young's letter of July 28, 1917, and mine on February 8, and March 14, 1918, you replied only in the most general terms or not at all. In your replies of August 1, 1917, and March 9, 1918, you insisted that it was none of the business of the Association of University Professors how Bethany dealt with members of its faculty. You noticed in no way my statement that I might visit Bethany. You broke off correspondence entirely after your letter of March 9, 1918. Despairing of getting your co-operation in the investigation, I then wrote Judge Campbell, who was the only one of your Trustees whose name and address I then had, sending him full copies of our correspondence and asking whether he could secure me a "clear and courteous statement of Bethany's side of the case." No reply has come from that letter of May 11, 1918. Professor Frank R. Lillie became acting chairman of the Standing Committee which appointed the Special Bethany Committee, Professor Young having been forced to resign by his heavy duties on the War Trade Board, and wrote me June 24 for information on the Bethany case. Reporting to him the course pursued as stated above, I asked whether it would be worth while to go to Bethany, and Professor Lillie replied, "There is no object in going to Bethany if the Administration remains entirely unwilling to go on record in the case. . . . Before proceeding to organize the report of the committee, it would be well to send President Cramblet a digest of the evidence with the statement that the Committee will report on the basis of the evidence in hand unless he wishes to present his side of the case."

Acting under these instructions, I drew up the digest and sent it with my letter of August 10, in which you were explicitly informed that the report would be finished in harmony with the evidence in hand only upon your failure to furnish evidence in rebuttal within a reasonable time. As you have seen fit to present, in detail, your side of the case, the report will be delayed until your claims can be investigated. Had you failed to reply, the Association would have been fully justified in publishing its findings. Any court of justice would have to pass judgment in any case upon the evidence submitted, even though one party declined to try to rebut the evidence, thus showing that he either cared nothing about the court's verdict or knew that he was unable to prove anything to his advantage.

Meanwhile, that you may feel assured that the Association of University Professors in arraigning a college before the whole academic world does not lend itself to any partisan interests, permit me to state that such a digest as I sent you would not be seen by the other members of my Committee until after they had been given time to examine for themselves every scrap of evidence in the case. Up to this moment no one has seen it but you and a member of your Board of Trustees whose name and address came to me on August 26. After my investigations, as chairman, are ended, all documents will be sent the two committeemen whose names I furnished you February 8. Later I must send them a tentative report

which they will study and individually pass upon as they see fit. If they both concur, the report becomes the final judgment of the Special Committee; if one member disagrees, his minority report will go with the majority report to the chairman of the Association's Standing Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure. If he and his committee approve, it will be published as the verdict of the Association. But, even so, the evidence will be so fully printed with the verdict that final judgment will be at the bar of public opinion.

This review of the course of the investigation to date, and statement of the rules of procedure governing such cases, have been set forth at length to disabuse your mind, if possible, of the notion that some conspiracy has been worked up against Bethany by some kind of a clique. The gentlemen who decided, after the preliminary investigation, that further enquiry should be made are among the most eminent professors in a number of the greatest universities in America. Until Professor Young asked me to serve as chairman of the Special Committee, I had never heard of Professor Croyle, or of any charge whatever against Bethany's treatment of its Faculty, nor had I ever met or heard of Bethany's President, beyond the bare fact of his existence as a preacher and the head of the college, except that I once saw in the daily papers that some dismissed employee had shot him. It is safe to say that Professor Hancock knew even less of the case and the parties to it. Probably Professor Willett was better informed. They were all selected because they were members of the American Association of University Professors sufficiently known to Professor Young to assure him that they would conduct the enquiry with impartiality.

Passing to your statements in opposition to the tentative findings sent you, let me assure you that they will all be considered and given due weight. But that the findings in the brief are without support, as you insist, is far from the facts in the case. There is not a single charge of any real significance that is not backed by one or more explicit written declarations from one or more persons of standing. Copies of letters you mention as received from the church at East Liverpool, Ohio, and others are in hand, and your charges against Professor Croyle were practically all stated long ago by him and denied in detail.

In Professor Taylor's case there is substantial agreement between your version and his, leaving it a clear-cut question of whether Bethany did right, not in discontinuing his services, but in doing so in the manner it did, which, after all, is largely the fundamental question in the other cases. As to your rule of a one-year tenure in the case of all professors—that is a matter upon which no question could be raised except as to its expediency, so long as professors accept it when going to Bethany, and are given reasonable notice and explanation when not reappointed.

As in these cases involving tenure, so in the single case involving freedom. Since you have filed your statement it reduces itself to a matter of deciding which of two or more witnesses flatly contradicting each other shall be credited. Before, the only evidence in hand showed that all reasons given for his dismissal, except a single general statement of incompetence in one of your letters, and the assertion that he *afterwards* proved himself base, showed that Croyle's friends and opponents agreed that his critical views were the real cause. No such question has been raised in the cases of the other professors, but it should be easily recognized that one such case, if proved, is ample evidence that a college is restricting academic

freedom, just as the University of Pennsylvania did, for instance. As the matter now stands, it will be further investigated. Pending such enquiry it cannot be made too plain to you that the Association concedes to Bethany the fullest possible right to require its professors to teach in harmony with its own views of orthodoxy and fidelity to the Bible as the Word of God, provided only that it make known this fact to the academic world and its prospective teachers.

From the foregoing you will see that it is no small task to get at the facts in such a case, and that the ultimate verdict must accord with the probabilities, which will inevitably tell against the college if it will not regard the matter as of enough importance to go into it with the thoroughness of the accusing parties.

APPENDIX H

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

Effort to Restrict Academic Freedom among the Disciples of Christ

The day after the chairman had finished the foregoing report for transmission to the special committee the document printed below came to hand. It is very pertinent to this enquiry because it was undoubtedly called forth by the failure of the Trustees of Transylvania College and the College of the Bible, Lexington, Ky., to purge the institutions of the President and Faculty Members accused of heresy by Professor H. L. Calhoun before he was presented to Bethany College by wealthy men who approved his course.

Transylvania made its declaration of independence when it sustained its president and leading professors, but a persistent effort has since been made to coerce it by claiming it is no longer entitled to its endowment. Other leading colleges of the Disciples have also maintained their right to intellectual and spiritual growth. But aside from what is clearly implied in Bethany's acceptance of the special gifts that support the two professors who left Transylvania, the former college has submitted to just such dictation as is proposed in the "Declarations" below by accepting a bequest upon almost identical terms. President Cramblet stated to Professor Forrest that in order for Bethany to retain the endowment of its "Thomas W. Phillips Bible Chair" the college must require the professor occupying it to subscribe to and teach in accordance with a declaration of faith. It is essentially like the one here discussed. Again the importance of publishing such restrictions is emphasized, and the danger to every professor in such a college is pointed out.

The following is from the *Quarterly Bulletin* of the College of the Bible, Lexington, Ky., January 1919:—

We present herewith two astonishing "declarations" that are required by a well-known and generously disposed Disciple of Christ to be signed before any individual or institution may receive his benefactions.

The first "declaration" is intended for the signature of those who desire to receive his gifts during the life-time of the donor:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPLYING TO
for financial aid for the purpose of
do hereby affirm that I (we) the
 undersigned am (are) a member
 of the Church of Christ in full fellowship and believe in and fully endorse the

entire Holy Bible as the only inspired word of God; also believe in all the miracles of both the Old and New Testament; also in the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, the Christ, by the Virgin Mary and without an earthly father; also that Jesus is the Christ, the only divine Son of God, the Father and Savior of the world; that He was crucified, buried and rose the third day from the dead, and is now alive and seated at the right hand of God; and also believe in Faith, Repentance, Confession and Immersion as the only means of accepting Christ and entering His Church, and that outside of His Church, God has not promised salvation.

"Witness my (our) hand and signature this....day of....., 19...."

The second "declaration" is designed for the use of those who desire to be remembered in the will of the benefactor, the gift becoming operative after his death:

"We, the undersigned persons, who constitute the entire membership of the board of organization controlling..... and all College Presidents, Bible Teachers and Evangelists employed thereunder, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the last Will and Testament ofand hereby seeking to maintain an inheritance thereunder, do affirm that we are each and all members of the Church of Christ in full fellowship, and that we believe in and fully endorse the entire Holy Bible as the only inspired word of God; also, all the miracles of both the Old and New Testament; also the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus the Christ by the Virgin Mary and without an earthly Father; also that Jesus is the Christ, the only divine son of God, the Father, and the Saviour of the world; that he was crucified, buried and rose the third day from the dead and is now alive and seated at the right hand of God; and that we also believe in Faith, Repentance, Confession and Immersion as the only means of accepting Christ and entering His Church, and that outside of His Church, God has not promised salvation; and we each and all, as the controlling board, for said organization, agree that this gift or bequest, shall be valid and subsisting, only so long as each and all of the parties herein mentioned, whether ourselves, or successors or said employees, shall subscribe to the above declaration.

"Witness our hands and the signatures of all persons required to sign this Article under this Will this....day of....., 19...."

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Fortunately, the position of this wealthy would-be-donor does not in any sense represent the spirit of the great body of men of wealth among the Disciples of Christ who look upon their wealth as a form of service and are glad to dedicate it to the carrying out of the will of Christ, rather than the will of any man, and who are willing to match the gift of life with the gift of wealth in a comradeship of loyal discipleship.

Without revealing the name of the author, the Declaration first quoted was submitted to President Nicholas Murray Butler, Chancellor J. H. Kirkland, Executive Secretary Robert L. Kelly, President Henry S. Pritchett and Editor B. A. Abbott, accompanied by a request for an opinion on the issue involved. The replies quoted below represent the position taken by leading educators and religious experts of America. These opinions might be multiplied a hundred fold, but they are quite sufficient to indicate the uniform mass of educational opinion on this vital subject.

Opinion of Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University: "A college should not accept gifts, no matter how large or how tempting, to which conditions are attached that, either now or in the years to come, will hamper the freedom and the independence of the trustees and the faculty so to conduct the

institution as to make it satisfy the real and advancing needs of its constituency, and to teach the truth as sincere and open-minded men see the truth.

"The history of the charitable trusts of England and the work of the Parliamentary Commission in regard to these, which made a notable report about fifty years ago, illustrate how impossible it is for the dead hand to reach out over future generations and attempt to control the thought and the action of those generations with any considerable measure of success. When funds are given to an institution of learning they should be given without conditions and because of confidence in the governors and the spirit of the institution which receives the benefaction. These governors must have full independence and freedom of action, and the spirit of the institution must be unhampered in its growth and development."

Opinion of J. H. Kirkland, Chancellor of Vanderbilt University: "In some respects this is the most remarkable case I have ever heard of. So far as the specific case is concerned the case seems to be about this. A certain man of wealth has prepared a creed which he requires every person to sign who applies to him for financial aid. Personally I might wish that he could find no person willing to sign it. If any man is so constricted in his theology that he is unwilling to render assistance except to people who are willing to sign his own creed, he puts himself outside the pale either of philanthropy or Christianity. A point of view like this is so foreign to the life and teachings of Christ that it cannot characterize any one who is really and truly Christ's follower.

"Colleges are not expected to conform to the views of their benefactors and have nothing to do with such views. I do not think a college ought to accept any gift that has conditions regarding the teaching either of Sociology, Economics or Religion. The world is too big and the field of truth is too large to justify a college in undertaking to be the exponent permanently of any body or any one point of view."

Opinion of Robert L. Kelly, Executive Secretary of the Association of American Colleges and Council of Church Boards of Education: "I take it that no self-respecting institution would accept money on such a basis as that set forth in the declaration. As President of Earlham College, I repeatedly turned down gifts which were offered with unreasonable conditions attached. Certainly, no institution would agree to have all of its faculty bound by the peculiar ideas of a single man. I think the 'declaration' you submit is a classic."

Opinion of Henry S. Pritchett, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: "I should say that within very wide limits college teachers should have the utmost freedom. Any college, it seems to me, would stultify itself by accepting a gift conditioned upon so dogmatic a statement and I cannot imagine an institution worthy of the name that would accept a gift upon such conditions. A college should use the utmost care in scrutinizing the conditions attached to gifts by donors, and should have the courage to decline any gift unless it expected to carry out in spirit the conditions imposed."

Opinion of B. A. Abbott, Editor of the Christian Evangelist (the leading paper of the Disciples): "The trustees of a college have no right to accept money from any man with any conditions attached that would require them either to violate the charter of the institution or the conscience of the professors. I am firmly of the opinion that there is some money that cannot be accepted.

"It is very unwise for any man to give money to a school and make specific and rockbound conditions. Unless a man can fully trust not only those living today but the honesty of those who come after them tomorrow, it is better to let his money perish with him. To give money to a religious institution demanding that it shall always teach a certain specific interpretation of any religious fact is a very subtle form of simony, which, no doubt, is not intended by the donor or by the receiver, but is, nevertheless, simony.

"I believe with all my heart that we have to take the larger views about gifts and purposes and ideals. Otherwise we cannot grow."